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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/675,883	09/29/2000	Nobuaki Takishita	JP919990091 US1	9224

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EXAMINER

BRUCKART, BENJAMIN R

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2155

DATE MAILED: 11/20/2003

2

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/675,883

Applicant(s)

TAKISHITA, NOBUAKI

Examiner

Benjamin R Bruckart

Art Unit

2155

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 29 September 2000.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

Detailed Action

Claims 1-10 are pending in this Office Action.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U. S. Patent No. 5,504,889 by Burgess in view of U. S. Patent No. 6,490,583 by Tada et al.

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U. S. Patent No. 5,504,889 by Burgess in view of U. S. Patent No. 6,490,583 by Tada et al in further view of U. S. Patent No. 6,072,490 by Bates.

Claims 6-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U. S. Patent No. 6,490,583 by Tada et al in view of U. S. Patent No. 5,504,889 by Burgess.

Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U. S. Patent No. 6,490,583 by Tada et al in view of U. S. Patent No. 5,504,889 by Burgess in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,862,325 by Reed et al.

Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U. S. Patent No. 5,504,889 by Burgess in view of U. S. Patent No. 6,490,583 by Tada et al.

Regarding claim 1,

The Burgess reference teaches a system of indicating user status (Burgess: col. 1, lines 25-27) for users and provides a status indication indicating the user status in said displayed status row bar (Burgess: col. 1, lines 33-43).

The Burgess reference does not explicitly state the use of grouping users.

The Tada reference teaches a system where at least one of a plurality of users is of groupware (Tada: col. 2, lines 28-34) and displaying a status row bar in a view window of each user (Tada: col. 5, lines 44-47; Fig. 3).

The Tada reference further teaches the document management system overcomes problems related to cost, operation management, maintenance, and expandability as access controls increase (Tada: col. 19-26).

Therefore it would have been obvious at the time of the invention to one of ordinary skill in the art to create the system of indicating user status as taught by Burgess while employing groupware as taught by Tada in order to overcome the problems related to cost, operation management, maintenance, and expandability as access controls increase (Tada: col. 19-26).

Claims 2-4 are rejected under the same rationale given above. In the rejections set fourth, the examiner will address the additional limitations and point to the relevant teachings of Tada et al and Burgess.

Regarding claim 2, the method according to claim 1 wherein said user status indicates whether the at least one of the plurality of users has read a document (Burgess: col. 1, lines 33-38).

Regarding claim 3, the method according to claim 1, wherein when the users are divided into groups (Tada: col. 2, lines 35-40; col. 3, lines 25-30; Fig 3), said status indication shows what percentage of the users of each group have read each document for each group (Burgess: col. 2, lines 12-15).

Regarding claim 4, the method according to claim 1, wherein when the documents are divided into document groups, each of which consists of a plurality of documents (Tada: Fig 8), said status indication shows whether at least one of the documents in each document group has not been read for each document group (Burgess: col. 2, lines 12-20).

Regarding claim 5,

The Burgess and Tada references teach a system of indicating user status in groupware.

The Burgess and Tada references do not explicitly state the use of colors or patterns in displaying user status.

The Bates reference teaches displaying status indication provided by colors or patterns (Bates: col. 10, lines 38-45) in a method of displaying and linking nodes of individual records (Bates: col. 53-57).

The Bates reference further teaches display elements can display the retrieve status easily and quickly (Bates: col. 4, lines 28-31).

Therefore it would have been obvious at the time of the invention to one of ordinary skill in the art to create the system of indicating user status in groupware as taught by Burgess and Tada while using colors or patterns as taught by Bates in order to display the status easily and quickly (Bates: col. 4, lines 28-31).

Regarding claim 6,

The Tada reference teaches an apparatus of users of groupware (Tada: col. 2, lines 28-34), said apparatus comprising:

a server (Tada: Figure 1 connected via tag 80) connected to a network (Tada: col. 7, line 38) and including a status database (Tada: col. 5, lines 41-47);

a manager operation section connected to said network and including a manager screen and a manager input device (Tada: col. 3, lines 32-45); and

a user operation section connected to said network and including at least one user screen and at least one user input device (Tada: col. 7, lines 37-41).

The Tada reference does not explicitly state indicating user status.

The Burgess reference teaches a method of indicating a user status (Burgess: col. 1, lines 25-2).

The Burgess reference further teaches this robust and efficient system (Burgess: col. 2, lines 12-15) overcomes the problem of users relying on their memory to determine which files they have read (Burgess: col. 1, lines 19-21)

Therefore it would have been obvious at the time of the invention to one of ordinary skill in the art to create the apparatus of grouping users in a system with manager and user operations as taught by Tada while employing indicating user status as taught by Burgess to overcome the need to for users to remember which files they have read (Burgess: col. 1, lines 19-21).

Claims 7 and 8 are rejected under the same rationale given above. In the rejections set fourth, the examiner will address the additional limitations and point to the relevant teachings of Tada et al and Burgess.

Regarding claim 7, the apparatus according to claim 6 wherein said user status indication indicates whether a user has accessed a document in said groupware (Burgess: col. 1, lines 33-38).

Regarding claim 8, the apparatus according to claim 7, wherein when a user changes said document, the statuses of the other of said plurality of users are set to "not read" in said status database (Burgess: col. 4, lines 20-25).

Regarding claim 9,

The Tada and Burgess references teach an apparatus of indicating user status in a groupware environment with manager and user interfaces.

The Tada and Burgess references do not explicitly state the use of email to notify of updated or cached out files.

The Reed reference teaches the apparatus according to claim 7, further comprising a mail generation component from which a mail is sent to members of a specific group who have not read the document (Reed: col. 133, lines 50-53; lines 24-34).

The Reed reference further teaches that the use of the communications object does not require any special server program or complex configuration and it can employ notification control to allow every member of the list to filter messages (Reed: col. 133, lines 53-56).

Therefore it would have been obvious at the time of the invention to one of ordinary skill in the art to create an apparatus of indicating user status in a groupware environment with

manager and user interfaces as taught by Tada and Burgess while employing a email notification tool as taught by Reed in order to notify users of new or updated data without a complicated configuration or special server program and allowing the users of the list to filter messages (Reed: col. 133, lines 53-56).

Regarding claim 10,

The Tada reference teaches a program storage device readable by machine (Tada: col. 5, lines 10-20; Figure 1 tag 60) for at least one of a plurality of users of groupware (Tada: col. 2, lines 28-34) that displays a status row bar in a view window of each user (Tada: col. 5, lines 44-47; Fig. 3); and

The Tada reference does not explicitly state the user of indicating user status.

The Burgess reference teaches providing status indication indicating the user status in said displayed status row bar (Burgess: col. 1, lines 33-43) in a program storage device through a tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for indicating user status (Burgess: col. 1, lines 25-27)

The Burgess reference further teaches this robust and efficient system (Burgess: col. 2, lines 12-15) overcomes the problem of users relying on their memory to determine which files they have read (Burgess: col. 1, lines 19-21)

Therefore it would have been obvious at the time of the invention to one of ordinary skill in the art to create the apparatus of grouping users in a system with manager and user operations as taught by Tada while employing indicating user status as taught by Burgess to overcome the need to for users to remember which files they have read (Burgess: col. 1, lines 19-21).

Prior Art

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure:

U. S. Patent No. 5,511,187 issued to Cragun.

U. S. Patent No. 5,590,178 issued to Murakami et al.

U. S. Patent No. 6,057,835 issued to Sato et al.

U. S. Patent No. 5,588,766 issued to Bates et al.


Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Benjamin R Bruckart whose telephone number is (703) 305-0324. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00-5:30 PM with every other Friday off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Hosain Alam can be reached on (703) 308-6662. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9306 for regular communications and After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-0324.

Benjamin R Bruckart
Examiner
Art Unit 2155

brb 
October 20, 2003


HOSAIN ALAM
PROBATIONARY PATENT EXAMINER